

# External Review of Quality Assurance Agencies

Proposal of the Review Methodology  
Technical Working Group (TWG)  
Cairo, 2018

# context

- The Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF)
- Initiative HAQAA
- African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-AQ)
- Goal: Harmonisation of QA and Accreditation in Africa
- **Pilot Phase: 5 review visits and 5 support visits in 2018**

# Principles of an External Review of a QA Agency (1)

- Overarching framework provided by the ASG-QA
- This is an evidence-based process carried out by independent experts
- Purpose: to evaluate whether and to what extent an agency complies with the standards in Part B and C of the ASG-QA.
- It shall be conducted in a formative way, based on the principle of collegiate peer reviews

# Principles (2)

- The Coordinating Body ensures that the whole process is carried out transparently and with high integrity, and that outputs are published.
- Gathered information through the self-assessment is verified by the Review Panel
- The external review report must be sufficiently detailed and must provide sufficient and verified information

# Main Actors

The  
Coordinating  
Body

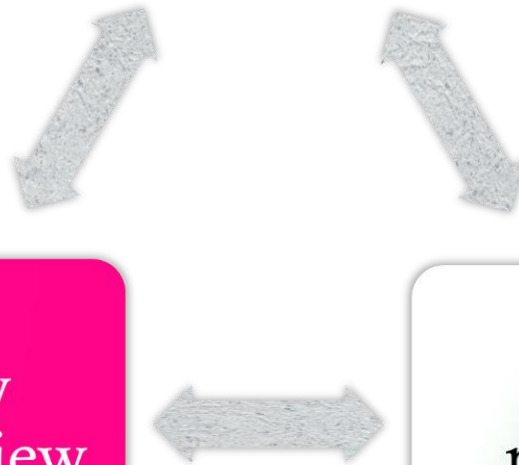
Prepares ToRs, select panel members and issues of contracts, organise training/briefing meeting, assign one of its staff as a coordinator and monitors the process

Under  
review

Agency  
under review

Panel  
members

Good  
knowledge  
and  
understanding  
of HE and  
QA  
No conflict  
of interest



# Roles and responsibilities

## Agency under review

- Plan for sufficient resources to undergo the review :

Contact person

Preparation of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR)

Provide the Panel with additional information

Organise logistics of the site visit

- Commit to openness and integrity throughout the process
- Commit to the publication of the review results.

# Roles and Responsibilities

## The Coordinating Body

- Prepare the Terms of Reference
- Select Panel of Experts
- Define a chair and a secretary from the selected Panel members
- Analyse the final and make a decision

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Panel Members

- The members are supposed to carry out their duties in a professional, critical and independent manner
- Have a spirit of cooperation :

Attend coordinating meetings between team members

analyser tous les documents mis à disposition  
Participate actively in the discussions



# concretely : steps, schedule, outcomes (1)

## **1 AGREEMENT on TERMS of REFERENCE**

Aim, roles and responsibilities, organisation and schedule, ... (see A1)

## **2 APPOINTMENT of REVIEW PANEL MEMBERS**

Three to four members from various profiles : HE and academic leadership, senior staff from QAA, international expert in QA.

From other country than the country of the agency under review, but at least one expert is fluent in the working in which the agency under review is operating.

Expected expertise : good knowledge and understanding of EQA, able to work effectively in a multicultural team, good communication skills, commitment.

# concretly : steps, schedule, outcomes (2)

## **3 SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) COMPLETED**

Template : introduction, development of the SAR, HE and QA of HE in the context of the agency, history, profile and activities of the agency, HE QA activities of the agency, SWOT analysis, internal QA procedures, alignment of (agency) with the ASG-AQ part B and part C, international activities, engagement with stakeholders, areas for future development.

Glossary of terms, Annexes.

## **4 PRE-SCREENING of SAR by the Coordinating body**

## **5 PREPARATION of the SITE VISIT SCHEDULE and INDICATIVE TIMETABLE**

# concretely : steps, schedule, outcomes (3)

## **6 BRIEFING of REVIEW PANEL MEMBERS**

### 7 REVIEW PANEL SITE VISIT

Usually 3-4 days, in the premises of the agency, meetings with the agency leadership and staff, meetings with stakeholders from HEIs among others.

Provision of a room for interviews and internal meetings (separate and soundproofed). Complementary documentation, if needed.

The panel is expected to share their first impressions with the agency leadership while on site (but no judgements on compliance).

# concretely : steps, schedule, outcomes (4)

## 8 **DRAFT of REVIEW REPORT**

Submitting it to Coordinating body for pre-screening (see A7)

Template: executive summary, introduction, methodology, findings, analysis and judgements, recommendations and commendations, endorsement of the reports, conclusions.

## 9 **REVIEW REPORT SENT TO THE AGENCY**

**STATEMENT of the QAA to review panel**, if needed (facts)

## 10 **FINAL REPORT to COORDINATING BODY**

## 11 **CONSIDERATION OF THE REVIEW REPORT BY THE COORDINATING BODY AND RESPONSE TO QAA**

## 12 **PUBLICATION OF THE REVIEW REPORT**

# beyond the pilot phase

- The methodology proposal describes how the panel will make their judgements of compliance against ASG-AQ parts B and C (compliance/partial compliance/non-compliance)
- Follow-up of the review, including an improvement plan by the agency
- Appeals procedure (against the decisions of the Coordinating body) and Complaints procedure (against any misconduct during the site visit or deviation from the signed ToR)
- Financial guidelines (cost of the review)

# recommendations from the TWG

- Foresee feedback on and taking stock of the pilot phase, with the stakeholders, adjust the methodology if needed
- Consider ASG-AQ as a living and evolving document
- Support the pilot agencies and ensure good communication with the others as well to help guarantee the project of harmonisation